

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph number [0001] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0001] ~~Cross-Reference to Related Applications~~Cross-Reference to Related Applications: This application is continuation of application Serial No. 09/318,019, filed May 25, 1999, ~~pending,~~ now U.S. Patent 6,284,571, which issued September 4, 2001, which is a divisional of application Serial No. 08/888,336, filed July 2, 1997, now U.S. Patent 5,955,777 which issued September 21, 1999.

Please replace paragraph number [0007] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0007] While lead inductance in IC packages has not traditionally been troublesome because slow signal frequencies of past devices render such inductance relatively insignificant, faster and ever-increasing signal frequencies of state-of-the-art electronic systems have substantially increased the practical significance of lead inductance. For example, at such faster signal frequencies, performance of IC dice using lead frames for external electrical connection is slower than desirable because the inductance associated with the lead fingers slows changes in signal currents through the leads, prolonging signal propagation through the leads. Further, digital signals propagating along the lead fingers are dispersing or “spreading out” because the ~~so-called~~ so-called “Fourier” components of various frequencies making up the digital signals propagate through the inductance associated with the lead fingers at different speeds, causing the signal components, and thus the signals themselves, to disperse along the lead fingers. While mild dispersion merely widens the digital signals without detrimental effect, severe dispersion can make the digital signals unrecognizable upon receipt. In addition, so-called “reflection” signals propagating along the lead fingers as a result of impedance mismatches between the lead fingers and associated IC die or between the lead fingers and external circuitry, caused in part by ~~lead-associated~~ lead-associated inductance, can distort normal signals propagating along the lead fingers concurrently with the reflection signals. Further, magnetic fields created by signal currents propagating through the lead-associated inductance can induce currents in adjacent lead fingers, causing ~~so-called~~ so-called “crosstalk” noise on the latter. While these various effects

might be troublesome in any electronic system, the aforementioned trend toward lower voltage systems (currently 3.3 volts) and away from the traditional 5.0 volt systems increases their visibility and significance.

Please replace paragraph number [0012] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0012] Another approach to the problem is disclosed in U.S. Patent 5,559,306, wherein metal plates are employed above and below leads extending to the exterior of plastic and ceramic packages to effect reduction of self and mutual inductance. However, such configurations as disclosed appear to require relatively complex fabrication techniques to locate and fix the plates relative to the die and lead fingers or other conductors for subsequent transfer molding of a ~~filled-polymer~~ filled-polymer package thereabout, while the ceramic package embodiment is not cost-effective for high-volume, commercial packaging.

Please replace paragraph number [0013] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0013] Accordingly, the inventors have recognized the need for a low-cost, ~~reduced-inductance~~ reduced-inductance circuit configuration adaptable to current packaging designs and employing conventional and readily-available materials, equipment and fabrication techniques.

Please replace paragraph number [0015] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0015] The semiconductor device of the present invention is especially suitable for ~~so-called~~ so-called "plastic" packaging, such process comprising the transfer-molding of a particle-filled polymer about an assembled and electrically-connected die and lead frame.

Please replace paragraph number [0019] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0019] A further advantage of the present invention resides in the mechanical support and protection provided the lead fingers of the lead frame by the voltage reference plane(s). To elaborate and by way of example only, a strip of conventional lead frames exposes the inner, unsupported ends of the lead fingers to substantial risk of bending and other damage during

transport, handling and fabrication steps prior to transfer molding. By adhesively bonding a ~~TAB-type~~ TAB-type metal foil and polyimide (for example, Kapton™ film) laminate voltage reference plane element to each group of lead fingers (for example, one voltage reference plane element running transversely across each of two facing groups of lead fingers in an LOC-type frame), the lead fingers are locationally fixed and protected to some extent from damage prior to affixation of the dice to the lead frame strip.

Please replace paragraph number [0034] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0034] As depicted in FIG. 1, die 100 comprises a 64 megabit VSMP-configured, ~~sixty-six~~ sixty-six (66) lead dynamic random access memory (DRAM), although the invention is not limited to the package configuration shown and described, or to a DRAM or other memory die (including without limitation SDRAMs, RDRAMs, SDRAMs, SGRAMs, SRAMs, EEPROMs and flash memory), the invention also having utility with regard to processors and application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs).